

# Illinois Early Learning Council Family and Community Engagement Meeting

Illinois Action for Children  
4753 N Broadway Ave, Chicago, IL 60640  
(Bridgeview Bank Building)

**\*\*\* 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Large Conference Room \*\*\***

**Cars parked in Bridgeview Bank building will be towed.**  
**Ample metered parking available in the lot across from the Bridgeview Bank Building**  
**(North side of Lawrence Ave, immediately west of El tracks)**

**May 8, 2015 • 11am-1pm**

## Minutes

- Welcome and Introductions
  - Attendees: Maria Whelan (IAFC), George Davis (Rockford Human Services), Leah Pouw (IAFC), Choua Vue (IAFC), Granada Williams (CEDA), Carie Bires (Ounce), Kathy Stohr (IAFC), Scott Kibler (IAFC), Angela Bailey (BPI), Andy Irawam (IECAM), Saleem Hue Penny (IAFC), Adrienne Stewart (CPS), Vinny Hall (Poverty Commission), Edna Navarro-Vidaurre (IAFC), Bob Cammarata (Through A Child's Eyes), Mario Garcia (Onward Neighborhood House), Christine Nicpon (Latino Policy Forum), Juliet Bromer (Erikson), Jenny Epstein (EverThrive).  
*\*Due to technical difficulties, phone participants were unable to join*
- Minutes approved from February 4, 2015 meeting
- Presentation: Kathy Stohr (IAFC), *Community Systems Development in Illinois*
  - CSD Background: Key challenge articulated by local communities: lots of innovative collaborative work happening, but not enough support from state level. Soon became clear, no way that Illinois can individually support 102 counties/850+ school districts, so better approach might be regional infrastructure. This concept was put into a plan in September 2014. When state writing Preschool Development Grant, OECD chose to include the CSD plan with a 4 year timeline (2015 as planning and thinking year, in 2016 implementation begins).
  - Long-term and Short-term: The overarching idea is "local collaboration is the way we can advance state goals". Working on the concept of a "regional hub structure". Have already had about 200 people and a "core thinking team" expanding this idea, currently in small-group planning. In meantime, two short-term recommendations are being acted upon: 1) clarifying the term "collaborative action" in statewide contracts, 2) supporting local data and information (i.e., understanding what collaborations need, and what they can get). No decisions have been finalized regarding who is hosting "hubs". Beginning in July 2015, OECD "Road Shows" to take the short and long-term ideas into different parts of state for additional feedback and discussion. OECD is starting to float these as potential themes for systems building: *equity and access, quality and effectiveness, sustainability and stability*.

- Discussion: Structured around “*Hopes-Needs-Fears*” that can be addressed through community systems approach
  - **(Bob)** hope... these 2 guiding principles be implemented throughout the process: 1) Be mindful of local communities, 2) Economic equity. Some of lowest income communities are the ones that are least prepared to engage in this work, can easily have those communities not be as engaged when a regional structure happens. Fear... that these guiding principles won’t happen. Looking at partner agencies, they are all funded agencies, where are the non-funded networks? In early stage had about 200 people engaged, now smaller group further developing those ideas, will lead to the OECD roadshow. The local network groups are very much like incubators, coming together organically, generating opportunities to secure Federal supports. Needs... to be consistent with maintaining focus on these 2 guiding principles
  - **(Maria)** fear... in tough economic times, this may be perceived as a way to simply going through the motions, doing another project to do it. One way to address this is if IAT really delivers on the Statewide Contracts piece. Another way is use of ABLE framework, seeing which other systems would be interested in using it (INCCRRA, ISBE, EI, etc) idea being to develop deeper field of systems thinkers. Mindset must be shifted, not just changing language in contracts/policies. Need... how do we move needle for right children and families, lifting up the most vulnerable children and families. Focus on developing deliverables and then holding communities accountable. Deliverable must be owned by the hub, identified from ground up (but still be the “right” deliverables, based on state/project requirements). Then review progress on programmatic level, otherwise programs return to the low-hanging fruit.
  - **(Granada)** fear... not enough time to see fruits of labor, because collaboration work takes so much time, with 1 planning year, only 3 for the work. One way to address this might be looking at how our data tells the story. How do we do this long-term, over generations, over staff turnover, over administrations?
  - **(George)** fear... might be useful to think of developing a system vs. Rolling one out. Do we know the reality of all the local communities? CSD/SIAC/ELC subcommittee has spent time over last 2 years identifying these communities. Also working with IL Network of Community Foundations. Fear... funding is not on our side. Where do we find those incentives and resources? Break cycle and reputation of unfunded mandates. Need... long-term strategic vision, we have certain targets (reaching hardest to reach), but this is different than saying how we want to do it. Need to articulate how we as a state see CS fitting into state.
  - **(Vinny)** Thinking of less traditional venues to bring people together. Also ways to engage the parent support agencies. Importance of wrap-around services. Fear... one-sized fits all doesn’t work. What does the State’s vision of “community” look like? Points to IAFC value of unique communities have unique needs. But also creating a structure that they can link in to.

- **(Jenny)** Consider using the Wilder Survey of Collaboration (the AOK Networks use it now). Food pantries are excellent example of places multiple types of families converge
- **(Christine)** Need to push definition of cross-sector readiness. Example: K-readiness, we aren't engaging the principals/school leaders along broader age continuum, only focusing on EC partners.
- **(Juliet)** How will parents, (speaking on the really local level), understand this, what's the language we'll be using? Evaluating work? Through process we're realizing as a state we don't have large pre-defined outcomes. Will be important to be mindful of this during implementation. How do we set it up to know if it will be successful? Defining success will be important. Learning from IZ evaluation process-- don't know what we don't know, being able to discover as it unfolds
- **(Kathy)** hope... that they never know the regional hub exists. That it permeates the system. On flip-side (public policy perspective), parents need to know hubs exist, because how else will parents know to advocate for it.
- **(Andy)** what is scope of data? First step is needing to know what types of data communities need, and also how to get it to them. Communities are used to feeding so much data up to state/system, but then have such hard time getting out/back what they need. Another step is they have identified set of 25 indicators. Also requires shift, because most data is collected for compliance
- **(Carie)** hope... thinking about meaningful inclusion of the other systems serving the kids. Often EC community trying to "find" the kids, but there are other systems that understand where the kids are
- **(Choua)** hope... that we reinvigorate the humanity of the issues we're working on. People need to feel sense of ownership that they can do something. Otherwise we won't have sustainability. Remind ourselves of our values, that we care about children; this isn't just about aligning state vision, but why we should care about our children and each other's children. So a set of values must be embedded, articulating what we believe in a way that everyone can grab onto a piece of it, then intentionally tying our state resources to what we believe

- Subcommittee Work Plan Updates

- Principles/Practices:

- Awards of Excellence, have been working with Juliet to identify tools to measure programs progress: The FPTRQ (family provider teacher relationship quality measure). Illinois used the conceptual framework from the FPTRQ research project when developing Awards of Excellence standards. Very exciting that now actual measurements are arriving that align with conceptual planning. Will also continue using National Louis University's assessment tool.
    - Additional focus areas are parent/community engagement not being as robust in the crosswalks. Looking to focus on professional development, plan to engage INCCRRA staff, especially with the family support staff credential. Also have looked at focus group results to see the areas identified for increasing knowledge base and training. FPTRQ co-author Toni Porter

will be hosted by OECD to present to public. Lastly subcommittee will be looking at best practices in community engagement.

- All Families Served:
  - Main focus is on workgroups. Child Welfare Workgroup & Homelessness Workgroup are currently meeting. Subcommittee decided to start with priority populations that members can put time/leadership into. Deep Poverty Workgroup and Linguistic Isolation Workgroup are likely to be next two to convene.
  - Innovation Zones recently expanded: Austin (Chicago), Altgeld (Chicago), Riverdale, and Elgin. May 21st is kickoff for the four new zones, then groups will convene monthly meetings.
- State Budget Updates:
  - Governor introduced his budget, significant implications for vulnerable families. Some examples:
    - Cuts to pre-K program already began, unclear what it will look like FY16.
    - CCAP has 3 proposals: raise copays, eliminate care for FFN providers, elimination of care for school age kids (cut-off at age 6)
    - Early Intervention eligibility going to 50%
    - Elimination of all services to DCFS wards at age 18
    - When budget called to vote, all 60 Dems opposed, all 40 Republicans voted “present”. Shows across the board lack of support
    - Starting July 1, state loses ability to pay bills for programs where no contracts in place
- OECD Updates:
  - Bryan Stokes joined OECD on April 28th as director of Preschool Expansion Grants work
  - ExceleRate validation study starting w/Frank Porter Graham (UNC) and AIR
  - Family Child Care for ExceleRate has chosen a dozen applicants
  - School based PFA (ISBE and CPS) will be enrolled in ExceleRate by end of May
  - First Bronze Circle for ExceleRate has been awarded
  - Awards of Excellence (AoE) supports continue for all content areas; cohorts are active throughout the state
  - First round of applicants for AoE submitted pre-requisite applications by April 10<sup>th</sup>, full portfolios due May 8<sup>th</sup>. All are applying for AoE for Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
  - More than 100 content area experts applied to serve on the Advisory Panels for AoE portfolio reviews, so OECD has enough candidates for current cycle, as well as upcoming cycles
- Next Steps: Upcoming Meetings

FY15 Meetings

  - All Families Served Subcommittee: May 12<sup>th</sup> (10am-noon)
  - Principles and Practices Subcommittee: May 14<sup>th</sup> (10am-noon)
  - Full Early Learning Council: June 22<sup>nd</sup> (11am-2pm)
  - Full FCE Committee Meeting (*rescheduled*) **new date July 22<sup>nd</sup>**

\*All FCE meetings held at IAFC Lawrence office.

### FY16 Meetings

- Full Early Learning Council: October 26<sup>th</sup> (11am-2pm)
- Full Early Learning Council: February 22, 2016 (11am-2pm)
- Full Early Learning Council: June 27, 2016 (11am-2pm)

\*All Full ELC meetings held at Roosevelt University.